



Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

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***NOTE:** This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.*

Emergency Services Resilience for 2012

(Sources: DHS and National Infrastructure Advisory Council)

Each new day of 2012 brings the potential for a man-made or natural disaster. Although no specific terrorist menace has been identified, America's enemies remain determined to attack U.S. interests at home and abroad. Furthermore, hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes, earthquakes, and wildfires continue to be paramount preparedness concerns that are frequently difficult to accurately forecast.

Recognizing the possibility of multiple calamities during this New Year, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) examined the appropriateness of critical infrastructure resilience for the departments and agencies of the Emergency Services Sector. The [National Infrastructure Advisory Council](#) defined infrastructure resilience as “the ability to reduce the magnitude and/or duration of disruptive events.” Resilience measures should bolster an organization's capability to maintain mission essential tasks during a major catastrophe and restore normal operations very shortly after the event.

According to the article, “[Urban Hazard Mitigation: Creating Resilient Cities](#),” (PDF, 62.5 Kb) researchers who studied the response of resilient entities to disasters found they had particular characteristics. The EMR-ISAC understands that the implementation of these same characteristics can improve the survivability and continuity of first responder organizations:

- Redundant—a number of functionally similar components.
- Diverse—a number of functionally different components.
- Efficient—a positive ratio of energy supplied to energy delivered.
- Autonomous—the capability to operate independently.
- Strong—the power to resist attack.
- Interdependent—system components connected to support each other.
- Adaptable—the capacity to learn from experience and adjust accordingly.
- Collaborative—the opportunity and incentive for broad stakeholder participation.

See the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [website](#) for additional information regarding disaster resilience.

EMS Safety: A Critical Issue

(Source: EMS.gov)

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned that the [Emergency Medical Services](#) (EMS) have been identified as a high-risk industry. Safety in the performance of EMS duties “affects patients, EMS responders, and the public.” It includes factors such as vehicle operations, medical errors, infectious diseases, scene safety, responder health and fitness, etc.

A three-year cooperative agreement between the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, with support from the Health Resources and Services Administration and the American College of Emergency Physicians, has brought together representatives from national EMS and fire organizations to develop a national EMS “Culture of Safety” Strategy.

The strategy document is now available in [draft format](#) (PDF, 523 Kb) to solicit stakeholder comments to assist with this or future strategy drafts. This draft is intended for public distribution per the aforementioned cooperative agreement. Public comment is encouraged and should be submitted prior to February 24, 2012. See [Submit a Comment](#) to provide your thoughts or recommendations.

Testing Emergency Plans

(Source: Disaster Resource Guide)

An [article](#) in the [Disaster Resource Guide](#) indicates that testing the effectiveness of an Emergency Preparedness Plan is a crucial step in both the preparation and recovery from disaster. The author asserts it is important that all steps for a quick and efficient recovery are in place in case of a man-made or natural disaster. “Testing before an actual emergency is essential to preparedness plan execution.”

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) noted that there are specific areas that a test exercise for an Emergency Preparedness Plan should include according to [Insurance Thought Leadership](#). To ensure a more effective and consequential disaster response and recovery, the test exercise should incorporate the following actions:

- Allows management to evaluate plans and procedures and assess if they are feasible and will work during an actual emergency.
- Determine how much organization personnel understand their role in case of an emergency.
- Improve any coordination or communication among the response staff.
- Decide which areas can be further developed.
- Enhance the ability to respond to emergencies by management and the staff serving under them.

For more information about productively testing an Emergency Preparedness Plan, visit [Test Your Emergency, Continuity, and Disaster Recovery Plans Regularly—Part 1](#), and also [Test Your Emergency, Continuity, and Disaster Recovery Plans Regularly—Part 2](#).

A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management

(Source: FEMA)

The effects of natural and man-made disasters have become more frequent, far-reaching, and widespread, according to the Introduction to [“A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action”](#) (PDF, 1.4 Mb). Consequently, preserving the safety, security, and prosperity of this nation and its citizens has become more challenging and affects all levels of government.

When examining this December 2011 document, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) verified that it presents a foundation to increase individual preparedness and also to engage with members of the community as vital partners in enhancing the resiliency and security of the United States through a “whole community” approach. “It is intended to promote greater understanding of the approach and to provide a strategic framework to guide all members of the emergency management community as they determine how to integrate ‘whole community’ concepts into their daily practices.”

Additionally, the document provides an overview of core principles, key themes, and pathways for action that have been synthesized from a year-long national dialogue around practices already used in the field. “It is a starting point for those learning about the approach or looking for ways to expand existing practices and to begin more operational-based discussions on further implementation of ‘whole community’ principles.”

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For information specifically affecting the *private sector* critical infrastructure contact the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center by phone at 202-282-9201, or by email at nicc@dhs.gov.

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